

What is a smartphone?

Computers come in many shapes and sizes. Here, we'll be looking at the smartphone – a computer that makes and receives phone calls.

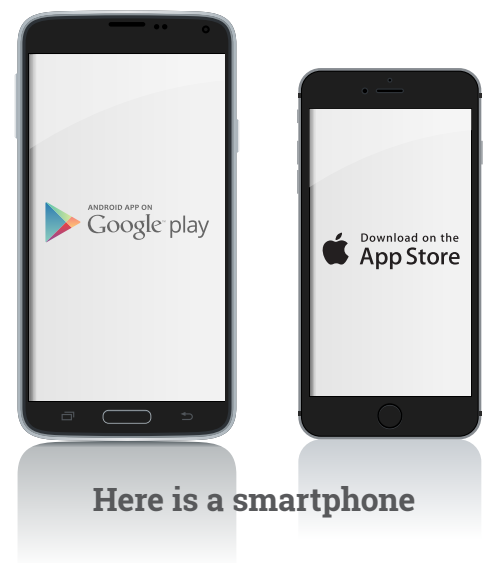
The modern smartphone is a computer that you can carry around in your pocket. It does more than just make phone calls (although it can still do that); it can also be used to use the internet, play games, video chat with other people, play music, pay bills and quite a bit more.

Parts of a smartphone

A smartphone has many of the same features as a tablet.

The main features of a smartphone are:

- **The touchscreen.** This takes up most of the front of the phone. The touchscreen shows you what's happening on the phone as well as lets you control the phone. You can refer to the tip sheet on tablets for the main finger movements use to control a touchscreen.
- **The Home button.** This is usually just below the screen - pressing it takes you back to the phone's main page.
- **The cameras.** There is a tiny camera just above the screen – this is used for video chatting and taking pictures of yourself ('selfies'). A second camera on the back of the phone is used for other photos.
- **The volume and power buttons.** These are located around the sides of the phone.



Phone services

To use a smartphone, you'll need to subscribe to a mobile service. This has a monthly charge, and will come with a limited number of phone calls and a limited amount of internet use.

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Making a call

To make a call with a smartphone, you tap the Phone icon on the screen. You can then make a call by either:

- Typing a number into the onscreen keypad.
- Choosing someone from your contacts list.

How to charge a smartphone

Like tablets and laptops, smartphones run on batteries. You can tell how much charge is left by looking at how full the battery symbol on the top of the screen is. It looks like a battery.

If it's nearly empty, you can charge the phone by plugging it into a wall socket or into a desktop or laptop computer.



Tap the Phone icon on the screen

Comparison of devices

Now that we've seen the desktop, laptop, tablet and smartphone, how do they compare?

- Desktop computers are big computers that need to be plugged into power and are designed to sit in one place.
- Laptop computers are small enough to carry around, and can run on batteries. Laptops have keyboards and track - or touch - pads.
- Tablets are even smaller than laptops, being about the size of a book. They also run on batteries. Tablets are mostly controlled by a using a touchscreen.
- Smartphones are small enough to fit in your pocket and can be used to make phone calls. Smartphones are also mostly controlled by touchscreens.

Which one do you think is best for you?

Time to surf

Not just a phone, a smartphone has a lot in common with tablets, laptops and even desktop computers now. They can run applications and they can even be used to 'surf' or use the internet!